

### REMARKS

#### A. Background

Claims 1-24 were pending in the application at the time of the Office Action. Claims 14 and 17 were rejected on formal grounds. Claims 1-12 and 21-24 were rejected as being either not enabled or indefinite. Applicant has herein amended claims 1-3, 5, 7-9, 13, 14, 17, and 21-24. As such, claims 1-24 are presented for the Examiner's consideration in light of the following remarks.

#### B. Proposed Claim Amendments

Applicant has herein amended claims 1-3, 5, 7-9, 13, 14, 17, and 21-24. The amendments to claim 1 are supported by pages 14 and 15 of the specification as originally filed. The remaining claim amendments are either formal in nature or are also supported by pages 14 and 15 of the specification. In view of the foregoing, applicant submits that the amendments to the claims do not introduce new matter and entry thereof is respectfully requested.

#### C. Rejection on the Merits

Paragraph 1 of the Office Action rejected claims 14 and 17 on formal grounds. Applicant has herein amended claims 14 and 17 as proposed in the Office Action so as to address the rejections. As such, withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

Paragraph 2 of the Office Action rejected claims 1-12 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as not being enabled. Specifically, it appears that the Office Action was rejecting the claims for attempting to claim a process that employs dewatering by "volumetric expansion" wherein the "volume of the article or the material remains substantially the same." The examiner was unclear as to how there could be volumetric expansion without change of volume.

Applicant wishes to thank the examiner for his attention to detail in pointing out this potential ambiguity. Applicant has herein amended claim 1 to clarify the claimed invention by deleting reference to "volumetric expansion." Claim 1 now requires that the excess water be expressed from the material by an "internal expansion within said material." Examples of such "internal expansion" are disclosed within the specification and include the expansion of a core member within the material and the expansion of gas bubbles within the material. Claim 1 has also been clarified by reciting that the "external dimensions of an article so moulded remain substantially unchanged during dewatering."

In view of the amendments to claim 1, applicant respectfully requests that the rejection to claim 1 and claims 2-12 which depend therefrom be withdrawn.

Paragraph 3 of the Office Action rejected claims 21-24 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter. Applicant has herein amended claims 21-24 as proposed in the Office Action so as to address the rejections. As such, withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

Paragraph 4 of the Office Action does not reject claims 13-20 but does appear to state that the claims are unclear relative to volumetric expansion. Applicant has amended claim 13 to remove reference to "volumetric expansion" and replace it with "internal expansion." The support for "internal expansion" is discussed above. In view of the amendments, applicant submits that claims 13-20 are now clear.

No other objections or rejections are set forth in the Office Action.

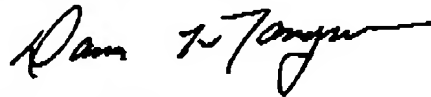
D. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, applicant respectfully requests the Examiner's reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-24 as amended and presented herein.

In the event there remains any impediment to allowance of the claims which could be clarified in a telephonic interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to initiate such an interview with the undersigned.

Dated this 7 day of January 2005.

Respectfully submitted,



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